

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a tooth rock bit, comprising:  
  
attaching at least one cutting element being predominantly steel to a surface of a cone; and  
  
depositing a hardfacing layer on the at least one cutting element prior to the attaching, wherein the hardfacing layer comprises a hardmetal coating.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at the attaching comprises at least one selected from a group consisting of electron beam welding, friction welding, and brazing.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the depositing the hardfacing layer comprises at least one selected from a group consisting of high velocity air fuel spraying, flame spray, plasma arc, plasma-transferred arc, sintering, furnace brazing, furnace fusing, pressure assisted sintering and reaction bonding.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hardfacing layer comprises at least one material selected from a group consisting of sintered tungsten carbide, cast tungsten carbide, and macro-crystalline tungsten carbide.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hardfacing layer is deposited to have a thickness between 0.030 in and 0.180 in.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hardfacing layer has a thickness dependent on properties of formation to be drilled by the tooth rock bit.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the depositing of the hardfacing layer comprises applying the hardfacing layer to a leading face of the at least one tooth.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one tooth comprises a gage tooth.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the depositing of the hardfacing layer comprises automatically applying the hardfacing layer.
10. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a tooth rock bit, comprising:  
attaching a first cutting element and a second cutting element both being predominantly steel to a surface of a cone; and  
depositing a hardfacing layer on the first cutting element and the second cutting element prior to the attaching, wherein the hardfacing layer includes a hardmetal coating.
11. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the hardfacing layer deposited on the first cutting element is different from the hardfacing layer deposited on the second cutting element.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 10, wherein the depositing of the hardfacing layer on the first cutting element is applied differently from the hardfacing layer on the second cutting element.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a tooth rock bit, comprising:

forming at least one cutting element being predominantly steel having a hardfacing layer, wherein the hardfacing layer comprises a hardmetal coating;

attaching at least one cutting element to a surface of a cone; and

prior to the attaching, depositing a layer of the hardfacing layer on the at least one cutting element at substantially the same time as the forming of the at least one cutting element.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one cutting element comprises a parent metal substrate and wherein the hardfacing layer comprises a hard metal composition.

15. (Currently Amended) A tooth rock bit, comprising:

a cone having a surface; and

a preformed predominantly steel cutting element attached to said surface, wherein the preformed predominantly steel cutting element comprises a hardfacing layer, wherein the hardfacing layer is deposited prior to the preformed cutting element being attached to said surface and wherein the hardfacing layer comprises a hardmetal coating.